



December 29, 1997

The Honourable Sergio Marchi, M.P. York West  
Minister of International Trade  
2978 Islington Avenue, Suite 103  
Weston, Ontario  
M9L 2K6

Dear Minister:

This is a follow up to our December 17th meeting where we discussed your assistance in pursuing funding on behalf of The Jamaican Canadian Association, a nonprofit, charitable, community-based organization with its head office located in your constituency of York West.

At the outset, I would like to provide you with some background information exemplifying our organization's commitment to identifying and responding to the needs of the community. In addition, I am including an outline of our Association's key programs and services:

- ▶ The Jamaican Canadian Association (JCA) is the largest and longest-serving organization in the Afro/Caribbean Canadian community. Our membership has grown over the past years to the point where we now have more than one thousand active members.
- ▶ In 1996 alone, through its various programs and services, the JCA provided assistance to 28,000 individuals.
- ▶ The JCA accommodates innovative approaches to the well-being of its members - young people, seniors and the community at large - through advocacy, education and direct service programs which are culturally specific.
- ▶ The JCA has spearheaded the Caribbean Youth and Family Services which has been operating in the Jane/Finch community since 1974. This program employs eight counsellors and provides specially-designed individualized services to young people between the ages of 13-21 who are on probation, incarcerated or having other social deficits. The JCA also provides individualized and group counselling for families.

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& Family Services**  
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**Lawrence Heights  
Community Centre**  
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- ▶ As part of its educational component, the JCA organizes educational conferences, as well as Black History Month programs and academic upgrading classes for youngsters.
- ▶ The centrepiece of the JCA's various cultural activities is the celebration of Jamaica's Independence in August of each year. Our centre will play host to many community events such as the annual John Brooks Scholarship Foundation Awards.
- ▶ A vibrant seniors' group forms a large part of the JCA's membership.
- ▶ One of our most successful programs, in terms of usage, is the domestic violence and incest/child sexual abuse program.
- ▶ Earlier this year, the JCA was the recipient of the African Canadian Achievement Award for Outstanding Service in recognition of its notable involvement in the community.

The JCA is now in the process of undertaking a major endeavour which clearly demonstrates its continuing commitment to the growing needs of the community. We presently occupy a building with 24,000 square feet of open warehouse space. Planning is underway for renovations - preliminary costed at \$770,000 - to begin next March.

During the past year we have established a Corporate Fundraising Committee with the Honourable Lincoln Alexander as honorary chairperson. To date the corporate campaign has received, through pledges and donations, \$80,000. Through various fundraising activities, the membership has raised an additional \$100,000. We have other fundraising activities planned for early 1998, including a car raffle. We have also approached a bank for a loan to get the renovation project underway.

Indicative of the JCA's obligation to continually strengthen and improve our long-term supportive role, are the priorities which have been identified in our renovation plans:

- ▶ A computer training centre geared toward unemployed youth
- ▶ A Resource library
- ▶ Recreation facilities geared towards young people and seniors
- ▶ Meeting rooms for training programs, such as literacy, academic upgrading and citizenship classes
- ▶ A main hall for conferences and cultural activities
- ▶ A Boardroom

Considering that this centre will be the only facility serving the Afro-Caribbean community, and considering the high level of unemployment in the black community, the importance of this endeavour in meeting emerging challenges is clearly apparent.

I would ask you, Minister, to carefully consider our organization's achievements and to also recognize our broadened directions for the future. Unquestionably, supporting such a project means investing in the future; it makes good sense to sustain endeavours that will lead to greater benefits for all sectors of the community. To this end, The Jamaican Canadian Association is seeking the financial assistance of your government in meeting this worthy objective.

I trust this request for funding will receive your careful consideration and I look forward to your positive response.

Yours very truly,

**The Jamaican Canadian Association**

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Herman Stewart".

Herman Stewart  
President

HS/ss



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Hon. Sergio Marchi, P.C., M.P.  
York West

OTTAWA, K1A 0A6  
March 6, 1998

Mr. Herman Stewart,  
President,  
Jamaican Canadian Association  
995 Arrow Road,  
North York, Ontario.  
M9M 2Z5

Dear Mr. Stewart:

*Herman*

Please be advised that I have written to the Hon. Sheila Copps, Minister for Canadian Heritage, with regard to the Jamaican Canadian Association's request for federal government assistance for its renovations to the current J.C.A. facilities.

Please be advised that I have forwarded copies to the other Toronto Ministers in order to secure their support in this worthwhile project, and to ensure that they are fully aware of your request since the J.C.A. serves the Afro/Caribbean Canadian community throughout the Greater Toronto area.

I have requested that officials from Canadian Heritage, will be in touch with you to discuss the matter fully.

With best regards.

Sincerely,

*[Signature]*  
Hon. Sergio Marchi.